

From: [NSW Government](#)
To: [Flood Inquiry](#)
Subject: Floods Inquiry
Date: Saturday, 7 May 2022 1:29 51 PM

Your details

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Submission details

I am making this submission as Other

Submission type I am making a personal submission

Organisation making the submission (if applicable) self employed

Your position in the organisation (if applicable) self employed risk management and communications consultant

Consent to make submission public I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story This submission focuses on:

The ability for Councils to manage global challenges such as climate change, with limited time, resources and specialised skill sets with specific reference to

- o Risk management methods and approaches for Councils
- o Upskilling and supporting Council staff- professional development
- o Resilience NSW providing additional support and resources to Councils for disaster planning and management

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#)

**1.2
Preparation
and
planning**

Topic: Business Continuity Plan

Business continuity management is the development, implementation and maintenance of policies, frameworks and programs to assist an organisation to manage business disruptions. Business continuity management is an important element of good governance. It forms part of an entity's overall approach to effective risk management, and can support the entity's capability to prevent, prepare for, respond to and manage recovery from the impacts of a disruption.

There are no legislative requirements for councils to undertake business continuity management or have business continuity plans in place under the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulations 2005. There are also no relevant policy statements or circulars for business continuity management issued for local government by DPE, the agency responsible for regulating and providing support to local councils in New South Wales.

Resilience NSW provides a Business Continuity framework for small business-
<https://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-12/Prepare%20for%20the%20unexpected%20BCP.pdf>

Recommendation:

There are no sector-wide legislative requirements or policies for business continuity management in Local Government. Councils can develop their own business continuity management frameworks. This can be timely and expensive, as Business Continuity expertise is specialised and in demand.

My recommendation is that Resilience NSW provide a Business Continuity Framework/ plan and supporting guidance for all Councils in NSW to use. The plan needs to consider what happens when communications systems fail or there are outages in infrastructure. The lack of ability to communicate in times of natural disasters is paramount. Virtual training session/s should be provided to all relevant Council staff across NSW to ensure Council staff are upskilled and knowledgeable in this area.

In addition – I recommend 'dress rehearsals 'or 'mock drills; with Council staff' and community groups and select members of the public, whereby the processes and plans for an emergency can be tested. Business continuity drills allow an organization to review their current operating system and the detrimental impacts that could occur should a threat or disaster cause them to halt operations.

**1.3
Response to
floods**

Topic: Emergency Management Plan

The Tweed Byron Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) is a document that has been prepared by the Tweed Byron Local Emergency Management Committee under the Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989. It was adopted in August 2019 and gets reviewed every three years. It is due for review this year -2022.

Recommendation:

My recommendation is that this plan is independently reviewed and improved with the support of Resilience NSW staff or resources. In addition, that NSW Resilience provide 'best practice' plans that Council staff can leverage for state wide consistency, taking into account the learnings from the flood inquiry submissions.

**1.4
Transition
from
incident
response to**

Topic:

At the Byron Shire Council meeting April 28, Council discussed the need for a communications tree following the floods. It was noted that a communications framework does exist and needed to be reviewed in light of the floods.

recovery

Recommendation:

The following online resource was designed especially for local councils and includes templates. "Get Ready".

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/resilience-nsw/get-ready-program-for-local-councils?fbclid=IwAR0WHlaOw9222f1yviWCNPlcnME9NXyKaOI4pbnLTu465nvehElvqRUub7M>

By signing up to the Get Ready NSW Program, Council staff can receive communications material including seasonal campaign content disasters. Byron Shire Council along with other NSW Councils, should be using these existing resources from Resilience NSW for a consistent and thorough approach. This also ensure Council resources (staff time and money) aren't being diverted by redeveloping the wheel. The Existing "Get Ready" resource can be leveraged, saving time and resources which can be allocated to other post flood recovery efforts.

1.6 Any other matters

Supporting documents or images
